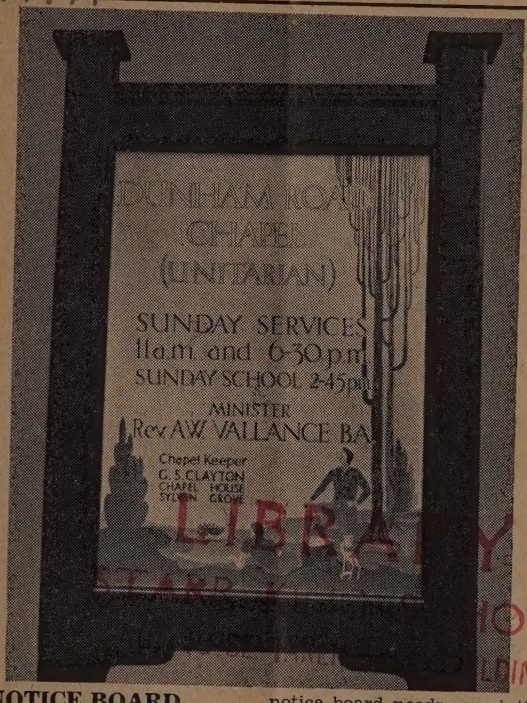
No 642 Twopence April, 1957

THE UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS



LIBRARY

THAT NOTICE BOARD

An Artist's Experiment

By The Editor

Look at this picture. No, it isn't a poster. It's just a Chapel notice board—painted by an artist. It was his idea, not mine. He was passing our chapel one day on business—he doesn't live in the neighbourhood—and he called in and said "Your notice board needs re-painting."

"Yes," I said, "our committee has decided to have it done."

"Good," he replied. "I'll do it for you." (Just like that).

He didn't explain what was in his mind. I just supposed he would give us a nicely lettered board in rather more attractive colours than the average church decorator can think up. But presently he turned

up again with a sketch in colour of what he proposed. It was breath-taking. Here was a picture in colour, in stylised mid-twentieth-century treatment, of an open-air scene, with lettering superimposed. There was a figure in the foreground representing St. Francis of Assisi, watching animals and birds.

"I'm not sure about St. Francis," I said. "In many ways, it's true, I'm a disciple of his. He was so jolly, and friendly, and kindly, and unorthodox and unexpected; but seeing him there, people might think this was a Roman Catholic Church instead of a Unitarian Chapel."

"Yes, it had occurred to me," said the artist; "but I chose him for his love of wild and beautiful things; and here's your chapel almost on the edge of a lovely woodland park full of wild creatures and people come out here on Sundays (and other days) to enjoy the woodland, and we are teaching that God is here too—in the temple made by man for his worship, and in the temple of the open-air."

"What about having two human figures," I suggested; "perhaps of different ages, to show that our chapel is for young and old? And of course, you can keep the animals."

"Right," said the artist. "I'll take it home and think about it." And not so long after he came along again with the finished notice board done in light colours with gilt lettering, and right away we got our tame photographer along, had it photographed, and then planted it facing the roadway.

The notice board has one defect. Keeping to light colours—which seems to me right, symbolising the lightness and brightness of religious faith, instead of the gloominess and stuffiness suggested by so many black and gold notice boards—the lettering does not stand out so clearly at a distance. But then the originality of the design makes you want to see it at shorter range, and you read what it says.

Why should not churches on principle adopt pictorial notice boards? The country inn has flaunted its pictorial sign from time immemorial so why should the churches, which are learning not to leave all the best tunes to the devil, leave all the bright signs to the pubs? In fact it might be better if, like the public house, they hang their sign *across* the pathway, so that people approaching could see it full on before they came abreast of it. A lot of people still pass our notice board without seeing it, because in order to see it they have to turn their heads a little.

So next time an artist offers to paint a church notice board, ask him to make it a hanging sign. And once our Unitarian artists have seen what can be done, I hope many of them will think it well worth while to spend a little of their talent on such important church publicity!

A LIVE EXPERIMENT

Every Tuesday at 8 p.m. in the chapel of the Unitarian College, Manchester, a short service (45 minutes) is conducted for young people of all types by a student or young minister.

Titles of some of the addresses have been: "God is black," "You'll be alive in 1984," "How'd you like to spend Christmas on Christmas Island?"

EDINBURGH HOLIDAY COURSE FOR TEACHERS
August 3rd to 10th, 1957

Arranged by N.S.S.F. and R.E.Y.D. For details and applications, write Rev. Gordon L. Clarke, 42, Schofield Road, Rawtenstall, Rossendale, Lancs.

If the petrol ration continues, it will have to be Great Hucklow for the holidays this year.

MISSIONARIES IN MINIATURE

By Phillip Mottram Brown

April brings us to General Assembly week. It looks very much as though Birmingham and the Midland District Union intend to do us proud. Only this week I saw samples of the posters they intend displaying, and a note about the handbook summarising the history of the movement in the Midlands. There are signs, too, that Press relations this year will be a little more thorough than of late. The newspapers of the land will be supplied with details of the leading characters taking part in the meetings, and someone did say photographs of some of our personalities will also be circulated. All of which is a very good thing.

But more important than all this is the evidence that we as a denomination are waking up to the vital need of publicising our faith. In London, a publicity sub-committee meets every two months to explore the possibility of forming a permanent publicity and public relations department. The exploratory committee consists both of experienced advertising men and keen-to-help ministers and lay people, all of whom have grasped an essential truth—if we are to continue, we must expand; and if we want to expand, we must publicise.

For close on three hundred years, the Unitarian faith has kept its light buried deep under the proverbial bushel. In times gone by there was a strategic reason for this. But there can no longer be any excuse for the argument often heard within our ranks that "if folk want us, they will find us!" We have to go out and find folk—a truth contained within a narrow compass is a truth condemned to eventual eclipse.

In London, the experts are talking of new style Press adverts, better, brighter propaganda leaflets, advance campaigns on a national level, and several other recognised publicity efforts. But, helpful as all these methods will doubtless prove, in the long run success or failure in any advance campaign depends upon the individual—the ordinary man and woman in the pew. It is upon these "missionaries in miniature" that our main hope depends, in effect—upon *YOU!*

How many times a week do you pass up the chance to say a word in explanation of your faith? Or to encourage an inquiring mind into a Unitarian channel? Or do you too often "say nowt" when the conversation turns to deeper things? When did you last invite a friend to worship with you? When did you last offer to take a neighbour's children along to your Sunday school? All little things, not requiring much effort or sacrifice, but upon such efforts depends the whole future of our movement.

If you are reading this, it is because you are in sympathy with all that the name "Unitarian and Free Christian" stands for. And if you are in sympathy, it is because within our liberal tradition, you have found something to help your progress along the road. Now comes a chance to repay the debt you surely owe; to be a "missionary in miniature" for your faith.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

The Wood Folk

The March Wind crashed through the trees and hurled himself across the clearing to such effect that two of the Wood Folk, who were sitting on a small mound, promptly disappeared and landed on their backs in a tuft of grass. When things were calm again, Nippa, the first one, said to Pippa.

"Well! I know he's expected but he doesn't need to be in such a hurry!"

But Pippa's attention was already occupied. He pointed.

"Look at that!" he said.

"Why, it's a notice board," cried Nippa. He read it carefully: "PRIVATE. TRES-PASS-ERS WILL BE PROS-E-CU-TED."

Pippa was excited. "What does it mean?" he asked.

But Nippa was annoyed. "It means," he said, frowning, "that we're not supposed to be here. We're not allowed."

"But we *live* here," protested Pippa, "it's *our* wood."

Nippa looked stern. "Ive got an idea. I must see a friend of mine."

He saw the friend, who was a carpenter, and by the next morning the notice was down. But those who had put up the board very soon put up another—a bigger one—and this one also said: "ANY-ONE WILFUL-LY DAM-A-GING THIS NOTICE WILL BE LI-A-BLE..." and a lot more. So back went Nippa to his friend, the carpenter; but when the carpenter heard what his saw was being used for, he said:

"Now, why do that? The notice isn't for *you*. It's for other people. who don't live in the wood. As long as it's there, nobody will come, and *you* won't be disturbed. It's really for *your* benefit, don't you see?"

"Yes, I do," said Nippa, after a moment, "I hadn't thought of that!"

EVERYTHING GOES SOMEWHERE

An Easter Meditation
By Joyce Hazlehurst

Once, in an old Reader, I found an interesting article on "The Chemistry of a Candle." It was inspired by lectures given to London schoolboys by Michael Faraday in 1827. A schoolboy called Harry, who had attended these lectures, was talking to his uncle (who had not). Harry asked: "What becomes of the candle as it burns away? Where does it go?" Uncle replied: "Nowhere, I should think. It burns to nothing." Harry exclaimed: "Oh, dear no! Everything goes somewhere. You can see it goes into smoke, which makes soot, for one thing. There are other things it goes into, not to be seen by merely looking, but you can get to see them by taking the right means."

Where does it go? Nowhere? Oh, dear, no! Everything goes somewhere.

You and I cannot ultimately destroy life. We can change its form, hinder its growth, make it resolve into other elements, but we cannot annihilate it. And when we have done our worst, nature tries to restore the damaged life: willow-herb throws her soft cloak over air-raid rubble; a broken bone tries to knit itself; a spider, when one web has gone, patiently spins another.

One message of Easter is that cruel men cannot destroy life and goodness. Jesus' followers came to realise—never mind how—that his spirit was still alive. The mourners by the tomb were told that they were looking for him in the wrong place. "Why seek ye the living among the dead?"

Henry Vaughan wrote:

He that hath found some fledg'd
bird's nest, may know
At first sight. if the bird be flown.

But what fair well or grove he sings in now,
That is to him unknown.

Everything goes somewhere.

WHO'S WHO AT THE G.A.

The New President, the Rev. J. Percival Chalk, of Croydon, formerly minister at Gee Cross and Evesham, was one of the first "Pioneer Preachers" founded by the late R. J. Campbell in the days of the "New Theology" movement. Before the last war he was a leader in the movement to deepen the devotional life of our churches and edited "The Way of Prayer," a devotional booklet. In both North and South he has given a lead to our churches and Sunday schools.

The President-Elect. To introduce the Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede, C.H., M.P., is quite unnecessary. Our former Home Secretary has given much service to the Unitarian cause, and recently returned from a visit to the U.S.A. and Canada as President of our International Association.

The Anniversary Preacher, the Rev. Arthur W. Vallance, of Altrincham and Wythenshawe, formerly Pendleton, Manchester, is known as Editor of *The Unitarian*, as one of the founders of the U.Y.P.L. and the author of its hymn (and others), and as a keen member of the Boy Scout movement whose Medal of Merit he holds. Church music and Dramatic Services and Pageants are among his interests.

At the Public Meeting, the Rev. H. Lismer Short, tutor in Christian History and other subjects at M.C.O., has had ministries at Rochdale, Brixton and Macclesfield, and has done much for the Arts Council in promoting music and drama, and he has been a mine of new and practical ideas for Unitarian churches, his influence having been felt also on the Editorial Board of this magazine. He is in demand as a third-programme broadcaster. Mrs. Haworth is an active member of Bournemouth church and Women's League. Mr. R. Grenville Needham, who speaks for youth, has been chairman of the Fellowship of Youth branch at Bristol and of the Y.P.L. at Altrincham. He likes Rover Scouting, part-singing, stage lighting and gadget making.

The Rev. Gabriel Kereki, who will conduct the Communion Service came from a Unitarian ministry at Budapest to study at M.C.O. in 1947. and has been minister at Tenterden since 1949.

At the Friday Conference: Rev. E. D. Davies, of Sheffield, is a Welsh-speaking minister who has given all his valuable ministerial services to England. Rev. Keith C. Treacher, of Golders Green and Highgate, is well-known as a pioneer of fresh ideas, especially in youth work and likes mountaineering. Dr. Jeremy Goring is a grandson of a former G.A. President, Mr. J. T. Bibby. As a South-Eastern province Lay Preacher he has had charge of Forest Gate.

The National Union of Unitarian and Free Christian Lay Preachers

AN EASTER SCHOOL

for Lay Preachers and others, at Manchester College, Oxford, April 18th to 22nd, 1957.

Specially Qualified Lecturers on subjects of vital interest to Lay Preachers.

£3 18s. 0d. full period, 19s. 6d. per day (travel allowance to Lay Preachers). For programme and bookings apply to P. J. Spencer, 114, Beeches Road, West Bromwich, Staffs. The **Annual General Meeting** will be held at Oxford on Saturday, April 20th, 1957 at 2.30 p.m.

NEWS AND VIEWS

OVERSEAS

SWEDEN. The Swedish Religious Reform Association held a Sunday conference with its Annual Meeting on March 10th at the Skeppsholmskyrke, Stockholm.

SYDNEY. The congregation is now holding quarterly meetings for discussing church prospects, and one outcome is a proposal for arranging discussion groups to meet in private houses in various districts with the aim of bringing non-Unitarians to discuss subjects with church members.

IRELAND

DOWNPATRICK congregation celebrated its tercentenary in December with a service in which the Moderator, Rt. Rev. C. M. Kelly, B.A., took part, unveiling and dedicating an oak plaque bearing the names of benefactors, given by Mr. and Mrs. H. McKeown in memory of their son, Hans Lowry McKeown. The minister, the Very Rev. J. Radcliffe, B.A. read the lesson from the new lectern, and the Moderator conducted a congregational act of dedication. The collection amounted to £110. The present church was built in 1710. Among the eighteen ministers who have served the congregation since 1656, a father, son and grandson served as ministers in succession, Thomas Nevin 1710-1744, William Nevin, 1746-1780, and William Nevin, 1785-1789. The special preacher at this service was the Rev. John Begg, of Ballycarry, who spoke on Christ's ideal for the church.

DUNMURRY. At the last Communion Sunday, when the communicants sit at tables placed in the aisles according to ancient Presbyterian custom, the seating of over seventy communicants presented a problem in spite of the use of two new tables and communion cloths provided by the Women's League. The Church Session hopes that the same kind of trouble will increasingly recur in the future! Over 100 prizes were presented to the Sunday School children at the annual prizegiving.

LARNE. An oak lectern and Bible were dedicated by the Rev. J. Arnold Williams, B.A., B.D., on January 13th. They are the gift of Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Canning in memory of their son Jeffery. A girls' Club meeting fortnightly has been formed in connection with the church. Membership is for girls over twelve.

HOME CHURCHES

CARLISLE. The congregation has decided to close and sell the present building which is in a poor situation. For the present, monthly services are to be held in different parts of the town, to ascertain where the best response is to be secured. The Northumberland and Durham Association will do all in its power to help to keep the cause in being.

CREWKERNE. The congregation is faced with the cost of £300 to renovate the organ. Prizes were presented to 70 boys and girls by Mr. N. D. Blake at the recent prizegiving, a record number for recent years.

DITCHLING congregation has frequently contributed to special relief funds, but made history in February by taking a special collection to enable a paralysed and bed-ridden invalid in the district to obtain a TV set.

DONCASTER congregation has adopted the Simplex Envelope Offertory scheme. A Service of Dedication of the newly elected commitee was held on February 24th. At the Youth Sunday evening service on March 3rd, the preacher was the Rev. Dudley Richards.

DUKINFIELD. On three consecutive Sundays in February and March the evening services have been respectively conducted by the Men's League, with Mr. J. Ratcliffe as preacher, the Young People's League, with the minister as preacher, and the Women's League with Mrs. Grey as preacher.

MANCHESTER. On February 24th., the Sunday following the 100th anniversary of the birth of Baden-Powell, special Scout and Guide parade services were held at WYTHENSHAWE by Mr. Henry Tittle, and at ALTRINCHAM, by the Rev. A. W. Vallance, two Scout troops uniting for the latter, and the chapel being very well filled. On Youth Sunday, March 3rd, the morning service at CHORLTON was conducted by the Y.P.L., with their secretary, Brian Dalby, as preacher. The evening service at ALTRINCHAM was conducted by the Y.P.L. with a youth choir which sang a two-part anthem, and the preacher was the branch president, Keith Noble. Y.P.L. members also conducted the evening services at WYTHENSHAWE, SWINTON, BLACKLEY, and GORTON, and there was a visiting youth speaker at PENDLETON. For the morning Youth Sunday service at URMSTON, the SWINTON Scouts and Wolf Cubs marched over five miles each way to give their support. SWINTON Y.P.L. served supper to the congregation after evening service and made £2 5s. for the Lent appeal. At RENSHAW STREET the evening preacher was the Rt. Hon. J. Chuter Ede, M.P., President of the I.A.R.F. Members of BLACKLEY U.Y.P.L. are helping in MIDDLETON Sunday School, and have arranged to visit STAND for a joint social.

MANSFIELD. U.Y.P.L. members conducted evening service on March 10th, and on March 17th, the District Association Sunday, the visiting preacher was Mr. Bernard Platt, of NOTTINGHAM congregation. The usual pancake tossing contest was held by the Social Club on Shrove Tuesday.

STAND. Evening service on Youth Sunday was conducted by the Y.P.L. with the national President, Geoffrey Waywell as preacher. The same week-end BURY and BOLTON Sunday School Unions held a joint week-end school for teachers at Stand, and the Rev. Dudley Richards, who led it was preacher on Sunday morning.

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Obtainable from Newsagents, Bookstalls, or your Church.
By subscription, £1 1s. 8d. per annum from "The Inquirer" Office, 14, Gordon Square, W.C.1.

THE LINDSEY PRESS
Religion in a Changing World: Unitarians State Their Faith
Nineteen numbers have been issued to date. The last three titles are as follows:
"The Gospels To-day," by L. A. Garrard, B.D., M.A.
"Freedom, Authority and Liberal Christianity," by F. Kenworthy, M.A., B.D.
"Can We Prove the Truth of Religion?" by Raymond V. Holt, B.Litt., M.A.
1/6 each, by post 1/8. Send for catalogue containing complete list in series.
The Lindsey Press, 15, Gordon Square, London, W.C.1.

UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

Mrs. S. G. Cocks, of Gorton, who had already raised £800 towards providing a bed at Broughton House Home for Disabled Soldiers was allowed to "State her Case" over the I.T.A. programme recently, and the £100 available was voted to her by the viewers, to further the good cause.

Miss A. M. Musson, of Hinckley, who has completed 25 years' service in the Sunday school was presented with a bouquet at the adult party in January.

Mr. Bruce Sharpe, of Sydney, represented Australia in the gymnastic events at the Olympic Games, and Mrs. H. G. Dowsing, also of Sydney, spent several weeks at Melbourne as an official in the Olympic swimming competitions.

Mrs. Sokell, who has for so long served the Women's League as collector for the India Fund, has retired from that Office.

MINISTERIAL CHANGES

The Rev. Barbara Thomas, of Cheltenham and Gloucester, and the Rev. F. D. Jones, of Carlisle, have retired from the active ministry.

The Rev. J. W. Maw, of Walmsley and Halliwell Road, is going to Cullompton.

The Rev. Jesse Cavileer, of U.S.A., is undertaking a twelve month's ministry at St. Vincent Street Church, Glasgow.

The Rev. D. Jacob Davis, B.A., of Aberdare, has accepted an invitation to Sychbant, Allt-y-placa and Capel-y-Bryn.

The Rev. S. E. Bowen is taking temporary charge at Aberdeen.

NOTICE

Charity of Timothy Dean

(Founded by Will dated March, 1726, for Poor Ministers and Poor Widows of Ministers)

Applications are invited from eligible persons residing in the Counties of Chester (to which County preference must be given) and Lancaster.

Forms of Application to be returned by April 25th, may be obtained from Rev. F. Cottier, 42, Windmill Lane, Reddish, Stockport, Secretary of the Widows' Fund, the Committee of which now comprises the Trustees of the Charity.

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Northern Sunday School Federation

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